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ABSTRACT

The history of the Coshocton Public Library (Ohio) is traced from 1872 through 1992, highlighting its connection with the Johnson-Humrickhouse Museum. In response to a newspaper editorial, citizens of Coshocton formed the Coshocton Library Association in 1872. The library evolved through the years as a free school library, a municipal library, a school district library, and a county district library. During this evolution, the Coshocton Library Board of Trustees supported the educational and recreational literary pursuits of the county's citizens through times of economic security as well as instability. The acceptance of the establishment and operation of the Johnson-Humrickhouse Museum in 1929 began the development of a unique library/museum partnership, one of only six currently operating in Ohio. (Contains 23 references.) (Author/SLD)

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# A HISTORY OF COSHOCTON PUBLIC LIBRARY, 1872 - 1992: A PUBLIC LIBRARY/MUSEUM PARTNERSHIP

A Master's Research Paper submitted to the
Kent State University School of Library and Information Science
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree Master of Library Science

by

Diane Zuro Jones

May, 1993

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Master's Research Paper by

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B.A., Muskingum College, 1975

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ABSTRACT

On February 26, 1869, The Age, an early Coshocton, Ohio newspaper, ran an editorial asking, "Why is not a reading room established in Coshocton?" This question was answered when a group of Coshocton citizens formed The Coshocton Library Association in 1872. The Coshocton Public Library evolved throughout the years as a free school library, a municipal library, a school district library, and a county district library. During this evolution, the Coshocton Library Board of Trustees supported the educational and recreational literary pursuits of the county's citizens through economic times of financial security, as well as instability. The acceptance of the establishment and operation of the Johnson-Humrickhouse Museum in 1929 began the development of a unique library/museum partnership. Currently, only six other Ohio public libraries have connections with museums in their communities. This study chronicles the history of The Coshocton Public Library from 1872 through 1992, highlighting its connection with the Johnson-Humrickhouse Museum.

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# CHAPTER I.

# INTRODUCTION

## Background

Public libraries and museums are two educational institutions which serve the public in many similar ways. A culture's history can be preserved through its artifacts and the written records of its great thinkers. American public libraries and museums have both recognized the important roles they play in our society by gathering information about events and thoughts of the past and present, as well as preparing to meet the future. Some American public libraries and museums have recognized these roles as common functions and have consciously linked together, by cooperative programming, sharing common boards of trustees and facilities, and/or entertwining finances. Some collaborations between libraries and museums have been described in an article by Diantha Dow Schull. Schull cites the following libraries and museums as having joint programming of shared exhibits in an attempt to attract new patrons: Atlanta Public Library and Goethe Institute; Houston Museum of Fine Arts and Houston Public Library; Cleveland Art Museum and Cleveland Public Library; Miami-Dade Public Library and Historical Museum of Southern Florida; Pittsburgh Children's Museum, Carnegie Library, and

Burke Science Center and Aviary.[1]

Some collaborations between public libraries and museums have been considered a "marriage of convenience." During hard times, various community leaders in America envisioned a union of the local public library and museum in order to establish a sound economic base to support both institutions.

## Public Library/Museum Unions in Ohio

The State Library of Ohio has identified seven Ohio public libraries which currently have connections with museums in their communities: Delphos Public Library, (Delphos); Birchard Public Library of Sandusky Ohio, (Fremont); Hudson Library and Historical Society, (Hudson); Massillon Public Library, (Massillon); McKinley Memorial Library, (Niles); Library Association of Sandusky, (Sandusky); and Coshocton Public Library, (Coshocton). Each public library has a unique organizational arrangement with its community museum.

The Delphos Public Library and the Delphos Historical Society have shared the same Carnegie library building for twelve years. Their union is strictly geographical. There are no administrative ties nor common programming.[2]

The Birchard Public Library of Sandusky, Ohio and Fort Stephenson Museum are one and the same. The library is located on a battle site of The War of 1812. There are five display cases in the library meeting room which contain artifacts about

Fort Stephenson.[3]

The Hudson Historical Society is a department of the Hudson Library. The library and historical society were chartered as one unit in 1910, and continue as one unit, today. One Board of Trustees governs both the library and historical society; the Director oversees both functions.[4]

The Massillon Public Library and Massillon Museum were linked for fifty years until January 1, 1989, when the Massillon Museum passed its own operating levy, thus becoming an independent entity.[5]

The McKinley Memorial Library and museum are located in two lateral wings of the McKinley monument. The National McKinley Birthplace Memorial Association, incorporated by an Act of Congress on March 4, 1911, owns and is responsible for the building and grounds. The Board of Trustees of the McKinley Memorial Library rents the interior space and is responsible for the library and museum functions. Currently, one director, who oversees both the library and museum, reports to two separate Boards of Trustees.[6]

The Library Association of Sandusky operates the Follett House Museum. From 1901-1976, the library and museum shared the same building, however, they are now located in two separate facilities. The museum's curator reports to the library director.[7]

The Coshocton Public Library and the Johnson-Humrickhouse Museum joined forces in July, 1929. Four years previous, the

city of Coshocton found itself the owner of a collection without a home, so the Coshocton Library Board of Trustees accepted the responsibility of establishing a museum.[8] The library and museum have always been housed in two separate buildings, under the direction of separate directors, governed by the Coshocton Library Board of Trustees.

## Rationale for the Study

The complete history of The Coshocton Public Library has never been recorded. Ann Miller, (Director, Coshocton Public Library), has expressed an interest in having this research documented. The Coshocton Public Library and The Johnson-Humrickhouse Museum connection is unique, which is true of every Ohio public library/museum relationship aforementioned. A study based upon public library/ museum linkage is needed, as stated in an informal conversation on July 23,1992 with Camille J. Leslie, (Director, Massillon Public Library).

## Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to record the history of The Coshocton Public Library, from 1872 through 1992, highlighting its connection with The Johnson-Humrickhouse Museum.

## Definition of Terms

A public library is defined as an institution established and maintained by the community, serving all with free and equal access. It is funded through local tax revenues. There is no admission requirement for its use. A public library may be considered an information center that provides reading, listening, and viewing materials which can be used for self-enrichment. It is no longer just a depository for books, but is also a nucleus where information is made available through a variety of support services and modes of communication.[9]

A museum is defined as a facility which houses objects of cultural and scientific significance for study and education for the benefit of society. It is a nonprofit institution, with professional staff, which is operated and financed by cities, states, regions, private foundations, and universities. A primary purpose of a museum is to provide people with further insight into their heritage through the collection and preservation of objects.[10]

A public library and museum are connected when they share the same facility, board of trustees, and/or director.

## CHAPTER II.

## REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

### Museums and Libraries--Bridging Educational Gaps

After conducting a variety of database searches, it is evident that there has been little written about public library/museum partnerships. Jacqueline C. Mancall, published an article in School Library Media Quarterly noting that joint activities between museums and libraries are acknowledged through anecdotal experience, but rarely through empirical research. Mancall discovered a few news clips from several library journals, but failed to find a major research study after several database searches. She writes, "Libraries and museums hold the artifacts of society. Collecting, preservation, distribution, and learning about these artifacts represent a major challenge to educators."[11] The partnership of museums and libraries will help to bridge these educational gaps found in today's society.

Hilda L. Jay and M. Ellen Jay also address the importance of library/museum connections for educational purposes in their book, Developing Library-Museum Partnerships to Serve Young People. The purpose of the book is to encourage librarians and museum staff members to take the initiative to undertake joint endeavors. The Jays give suggestions for cooperative personnel

development, public relations, production, and programming, including a listing of museum artifacts in the library's card catalog, using preplanned museum programs, and creating curricular applications.[12]

A concrete example of the library/museum connection is found in the newly opened facility in Las Vegas. Joyce K. Dixon describes the planning for the new building which houses both the Las Vegas Library and the Lied Discovery Children's Museum in her article, "Experiencing Architecture: The Young People's Library Department in Las Vegas." "The Young People's Library functions as the bridge symbolically and literally between museum and library."[13]

Another example of the public library/museum connection is described by Art Milner in Wilson Library Bulletin. The Franklin Institute, located in Philadelphia, is "a unique combination of museum, planetarium, library, basic research center, and applied research organization that mirrors the interdisciplinary interests of the man for whom it is named."[14] This quasi-museum/library institute provides informational service which requires technical and industrial expertise.

## Recommendations

Recommendations for establishing public library-museum partnerships are set forth in several recent articles. On an international scale, Peter Homulos presented a paper to the IFLA Section of Art Libraries at Paris, August, 1989, calling for the establishment of a formal relationship between IFLA, ICOM

(International Council of Museums), and the International Council of Archives. [15]

James Danky makes eight recommendations concerning the unification of the Racine County Historical Museum, the Racine County Historical Society, and the Racine Public Library following a carefully conducted study. Quite often, cooperative ventures among libraries, museums, and other cultural institutions are impeded by the desire to maintain individual autonomy. Danky builds a case for consolidation for the benefit of all concerned.[16]

Katherine Martinez speaks to the necessity of establishing official ties between art institutes and libraries, based upon her experiences while writing her dissertation. Her research itinerary was mapped out by serendipitous and accidental conversations with other researchers, librarians, archivists, and print curators, rather than any formal art library network. It is her contention that if museums and libraries coordinated acquisitions and established a recognizable network, dwindling funds could be saved and reader services would improve.[17]

## History of Library/Museum Ties

"Once upon a time museums and libraries were viewed as partners in the quest for knowledge. At the famous library in Alexandria, before the Christian era, object and books were equally collected for the best minds of the known world."[18] Today, however the connection between public libraries and museums is not as strong. Stephanie Sigala chronicles the

history and development of the Saint Louis Art Museum and the Richardson Memorial Library, a museum and library established for the benefit of the common man.

Diantha Dow Schull reminds the reader that the Library of Congress was originally intended as a museum of literature, science and art. The museum/library design was built in 1897 with major exhibition spaces. By the middle of the 20th century, the increase in holdings and staff forced the exhibition spaces into functional units. Under the leadership of Daniel Boorstin, the library has reclaimed much of its exhibition space.[19]

John Cotton Dana is an example of a pioneer in the field of museum/library cooperation. William J. Dane's article speaks of Dana's influence upon the library and museum worlds. Beginning in 1902, Dana was responsible for the development of remarkable art collections in the Newark Public Library. In fact, the art exhibitions he established in the library led to the founding of The Newark Museum. The connection between the public library and the museum was recognized by Dana as an important link in the establishment and the appreciation of the arts. Today, the John Cotton Dana Awards are presented annually by the H. W. Wilson Company and the American Library Association's Library Administration and Management Division for exceptional library public relations efforts. Dana's philosophy continues to have a lasting influence upon American libraries and museums.[20]

## CHAPTER III.

## METHODOLOGY

The type of methodology employed in this study is historical in nature. The majority of the data is collected from primary sources. A primary source is the testimony of an eyewitness through written or oral communication. This data includes minutes from the Coshocton Public Library Board of Trustees monthly meetings, directors' annual reports, library scrapbooks, correspondence and local history archival material. Past issues of The Coshocton Democrat and Standard and Coshocton Tribune, (local newspapers), were also consulted.

A rich source of information was gained through informal conversations with Margaret Sahling, former director of the Coshocton Public Library (1931-1968), and Mary Shaw, former director of The Johnson-Humrickhouse Museum (1963-1988). Additional conversations with the current directors, Ann Miller (Coshocton Public Library) and Midge Derby (Johnson-Humrickhouse Museum), also provided a primary source of material for research.

The organization and analysis of internal and external data are incorporated in the historical synthesis. The use of external sources provides authenticity while internal references supply credibility.

According to Thomas E. Felt, author of Researching, Writing, and Publishing Local History, two standards are necessary in the historical research process; they are ethics and competence. Ethics requires respect for the entire truth. Competence demands the proper research, writing, and publishing methodology.[21] It was the intent of this researcher to employ ethics and competence during the preparation of this study.

CHAPTER IV.

HISTORY

## The Early Years

The first libraries in Coshocton were located in the homes of prominent citizens for the benefit of personal enrichment. In 1872, The Coshocton Library Association was formed with J. C. Fisher as president and J. M. Compton as secretary. The association leased a room in the Cunningham Block on Main Street near the 5th Street railroad depot. Memberships to this association were sold to gentlemen for $5.00 and ladies for $3.00. The original collection numbered two hundred books and twenty periodicals.

A ladies group, called the Blue Stocking Club, established another library on the third floor of the John Shaw building for their members and friends. They raised money for books by sponsoring various lecture series. They were forced to disband because some of their speakers, including Elizabeth Cady Stanton, were so controversial.

The ladies club books became a part of the collection in the library operated by the W.C.T.U. (Women's Christian Temperance Union), located over the Tyler Restaurant in Dr. Samuel Lee's building on Main Street. Mrs. R. M. Voorhees, Mrs. Crossley and Mrs. Palmer were leaders in the movement. Mrs. Skinner was

appointed librarian. In 1891, membership cost $1.00 a year. On February 24, 1892, by the Act of the General Assembly of Ohio, the Coshocton Free School Library was established "for the use of the pupils of the Coshocton Public Schools and the citizens of the village of Coshocton, Ohio."[22] For several years, 1892-1897, the W.C.T.U. struggled to maintain the library with an annual tax of $350, authorized by law. After the public school library was turned over to the W.C.T.U. library, the quarters were found to be too small. On December 10, 1895, the library relocated to the corner of Fourth and Main Street in the Nichols building.[23] George M. Gray established the popular reading room which operated in conjunction with the Y.M.C.A. Dr. W.C. Frew refused to honor a pledge to pay $25.00 to the library in 1897 because he was left off of the board of managers and was not given a role in the management of the library. According to a political leaflet circulated in Coshocton, March, 1899, "he was left off because his atheistic and infidel views are obnoxious to more than 99 per cent of the people of this community."[24] At this time, the library was supported by a meager tax and numerous donations by private citizens. When the Y.M.C.A. disbanded, the library was turned over to the first library board of trustees.

On January 7, 1898, the Coshocton Free School Library of Coshocton, Ohio was established. The board of trustees included: J. F. Meek, president; George M. Gray, vice-president; Mrs. R. M. (Annie B.) Voorhees, treasurer; John W. Cassingham; and W. A. Himebaugh. The first librarian was John S. Beall. A separate book committee was established for the inspection and purchase of books and periodicals. Any resident of the Coshocton Union

School District could become a member of the Library Association by paying a $1.00 membership fee per year. Membership was open to persons outside of Coshocton County for $3.00 a year. According to the Rules and Regulations of the Coshocton Free School Library, a member of the association could only borrow one volume at a time for a two-week period. Books of recent purchase labeled "New Books" could only be retained for one week. Any overdue materials would accrue a fine of three cents a day. Persons were not permitted to read a daily newspaper in the Reading Room longer than twenty minutes at one time on the day the newspaper was received.[25]

In 1899, the library contained about 1500 volumes. Joseph Love was named librarian September 11, 1899. Love cataloged the books according to the Dewey Decimal System and adopted the charging system of the Carnegie libraries. By 1903, under Love's leadership, the library's collection had more than doubled in size. The library was outgrowing its quarters.

## A Municipal Library

In 1902, inspired by an interest in the public library, Frank E. Pomerene, a prominent Coshocton attorney, corresponded with Andrew Carnegie. (Coshocton connected Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania with Columbus, Ohio on Carnegie's Pennsylvania Railroad line). On December 27, 1902, Carnegie agreed to contribute $15,000 for the construction of a new library building if the city of Coshocton would agree to furnish the site and finance its operation at a cost of not less than $1500.00 a year. Some citizens were opposed to Carnegie's offer because they

wanted a Coshocton Library, not a Carnegie one. The Coshocton Free School Library, however, was in favor of the offer. The city council issued bonds for $4,000 to purchase the site. The land, located on the corner of Fourth and Chestnut Streets, was purchased from L.W. Beach for $2,400. The surplus $1600 went into the building fund. Hart and Company, Columbus architects, designed the 92 by 50 foot building of pressed granite-colored brick and stone. Casteel and Co., Canton contractor, completed the structure at a total cost of about $22,400 (for the building and the site). A news article in the April 15, 1904 edition of The Coshocton Age stated, "Many patrons of the library will be delighted to know that the floors in the Carnegie Library are to be carpeted with cork which will do much to deaden sound."[26] The cork floor was laid on May 22-25, 1904 by U. Grant Howell who worked for the Ransom Dry Goods Co. of Coshocton. Upon completion, Carnegie sent his representative, Colonel Church, to inspect the building. When he saw the building, he was so pleased with the economical expenditure, that Mr. Carnegie sent an extra $2,000. It was the one thousandth library built by Andrew Carnegie. "Carnegie Library" was inscribed over the door; however, the official name of the library as a tax-supported institution was, "Coshocton Public Library."

The Coshocton Public Library opened on May 5, 1904, free of all debt. It contained reading rooms for adults and children, an assembly hall for 300 people on the second floor, and club rooms in the basement. Prior to the official opening, representatives from the Coshocton Woman's Club, Historical Club, Chatauqua Circle, W.C.T.U., Home Study Circle and New Century Club met and

viewed "with special delight" the room which had been set apart in the library for their use.[27] The library's collection of 4,124 books included the W.C.T.U. collection. Membership of the book selection committee included some members of the board of trustees and persons having subject expertise. Being a tax-supported municipal library, the mayor appointed the trustees. On May 1, 1903, Mayor Rinner appointed the new board: M. Q. Baker, president; F. E. Pomerene, secretary and treasurer; J. C. Fisher, vice-president; John Hay; W. A. Smith; and H. D. Beach. Joseph Love continued as librarian until January, 1915.

During the first year of operation in the Carnegie building, the library boasted a circulation of 24,033 books. The library also served as a meeting place for various clubs. As a cultural center, the museum of the public library was first mentioned in an article in the Coshocton Weekly Times, September 19, 1907. Charles Compton donated to the museum of the library a collection of relics which he gathered during his worldwide travels. One prized item was a statue carved from sycamore wood, taken from the tomb of the Goddess Osiris, which he bought in the Egyptian museum at Cairo. The statue was believed to be dated B.C. 3762, making it one of the world's oldest relics. Other items were collected in the Philippines, China, and Ireland. The collection was highly prized by the library and was properly mounted and displayed for public observation.[28]

From 1903 to 1924, the library operated as a municipal library under the mayor and city council. It operated by monies obtained from the general fund. Eleanor Olney was director from February, 1915 to July, 1918. Her sister-in-law, Mrs. Clara B.

Olney, assumed directorship in August, 1918 which she held until June, 1931.

In 1924, the library was converted from a municipal library to a city school district library and was placed under the administration of the City School Board. This reorganization enabled the library to expand its financial base, by receiving income based on real estate tax. The Coshocton City Board of Education appointed seven trustees, whose terms expired one per year. The trustees of the reorganized library were: Mrs. Thomas G. Brown; J. J. Dolan; Mrs. F. E. Pomerene; James M. Stuart; Miss Carrie Wagner, W. W. March; and C. K. Clemens. The Coshocton Public Library continued to operate as a school district library until 1950.

## The Johnson-Humrickhouse Museum

As the Coshocton Library movement was emerging, during the latter part of the 19th century, two brothers, living in Coshocton, began to develop an avid interest in the hobby of collecting. David M. Johnson, born September 5, 1837, and John Humrickhouse Johnson, born December 18, 1842, lived on a farm on County Road 16, in Coshocton County. During their youth, their father erected a separate building to house their collections of butterflies, bugs, snakes, pennies, stamps, arrowheads, and stone axes. In 1871, the Johnson family moved to New York, but retained ties with other family members in Coshocton. In 1880, the brothers traveled to Europe to establish a dressmaking business in France. John Johnson had a special interest in Belgian and

Flemish lace. He was also facinated by Japanese and Chinese pottery, only then becoming available to the West. David's knowledge in business matters and John's artistic skills proved to be a successful combination. Following their parents' death, the Johnson brothers sold their estate in New York and invested in real estate in Tacoma, Washington. John and David Johnson, being supported by their revenues as landlords, spent their energies travelling and collecting priceless treasures from Europe, China, Japan, and the northwest coast of North America.

In 1909, John and David Johnson filed articles of incorporation for a Johnson-Humrickhouse Memorial Museum to be established in Coshocton, after their deaths. It was to be a memorial to their mother's and father's families (thus the name, "Johnson-Humrickhouse"). The artifacts were to "be displayed for the use and education and benefit of the people of Coshocton, Ohio and of the public generally."[29] The Johnson brothers retained the Humrickhouse home, a large property on Third and Mulberry Streets in Coshocton. It was assumed that this would be the site of the museum. However, upon the deaths of David, in 1914, and John in 1924, there just was not enough money left to establish a museum and provide for its maintenance as well. The collection was divided; some artifacts were located in Coshocton and others in Tacoma and Los Angeles. No one was quite sure of the value or extent of the Johnson collection. In 1924, the city council of Coshocton turned over responsibility of the collection to the public library at the suggestion of Warner Pomerene, Coshocton attorney representing the Johnson brothers.

In 1930, William H. Bachert, a Coshocton businessman, became

interested in the Johnson collection when John Hoehns, of Coshocton, wanted to sell his own collection of Indian curios. Thinking the Johnson collection and Hoehns' collection could be combined for display, Bachert obtained permission to inspect the cases stored at the Humrickhouse home. Bachert discovered, beneath the dust of seven years, that a large number of pieces were of obvious worth. He requested the transfer of the cases to his home where they could be suitably protected. They were brought to the second floor of his garage. He requested a list of the remaining items in the collections located in Tacoma and Los Angeles. The list he received was 108 pages long, of over 15,000 objects, revealing articles of great value. Bachert and Pomerene worked endlessly to bring the collection together in Coshocton. On January 6, 1931, a train left Tacoma carrying two railroad express cars filled with 109 boxes, 20 crates, 30 barrels and two bales of Johnson artifacts.[30]

The Coshocton School Board agreed to lease the former Sycamore School building to the Coshocton Public Library Board as a home for the Johnson collection. On May 8, 1931, the Johnson-Humrickhouse Memorial Museum opened its doors to the public. From 1931 to 1941, under the direction of Mrs. Irma Anderson, Coshocton Public Library's assistant librarian, the museum gained notoriety through its many educational programs for the community and beyond. Anderson took advantage of every opportunity to make the public aware of the museum through publicity in the newspaper, on radio broadcasts, at club meetings, adult education classes, and school tours. Mrs. Anderson left her position to become curator of textiles at the

Ohio Archaeological and Historical Society. Her successor was Mrs. Ethel Lybarger who continued Anderson's programs. In 1947, the Miller-Preston collection was added to the museum. This collection consisted of local pioneer artifacts belonging to the Miller and Preston families. Lybarger had helped to catalog the collection when it was privately owned by Clifford and Cora Miller Preston of Keene township, Coshocton County.

Dependent upon volunteers and on leisure time, the museum waned in importance during World War II and the post-war years. Mrs. Lybarger retired in 1953 and Mrs. Lura B. Ferrel was named her successor by the Coshocton Public Library Board of Trustees. Although she tried to stimulate interest in the museum, attendance figures continued to fall. During the last full year before her resignation in 1963, the number of visitors had fallen dramatically.

In October, 1963, the Library Board appointed Mrs. Lowell Derbyshire and Mrs. Mary Shaw as co-directors. Together, they planned to make the old Sycamore School building more attractive to visitors. Display cases, plumbing, and the floors were all repaired. A reopening in April, 1964 attracted over 1800 people. Various substantial bequeaths and collections from numerous estates helped to boost the museum's financial state. In 1966, Mr. James Nichols, an expert in Oriental art from Kalamazoo, Michigan, visited the museum to help conduct an inventory of its Oriental contents. In 1973, Thomas J. Fettig, curator of the Gallop Indian Trading Post Museum in New Mexico, visited the museum to appraise the Indian basketry. Both of these experts were amazed at the excellence of the museum's collections.

In 1970, the library board voted to purchase the Sycamore School building for one dollar from the Coshocton City School Board after having used it rent-free for more than four decades. In 1973, The Johnson-Humrickhouse Museum obtained national accreditation from the American Association of Museums. It became a member of the Ohio Museums Association in 1976. In that same year, the Coshocton Public Library Board of Trustees, headed by Stanley Shaw, applied for a grant of $470,326 from the Economic Development Administration, for the remodeling of the old Sycamore School building. The federal government responded in July, 1977, with a grant of $278,150. In September, 1977, Edward Montgomery, founder of Roscoe Village, home of Coshocton's 1830 restored canal era community, offered the museum $500,000 if it would erect a new building within Roscoe Village. The library board recognized that this move would provide opportunities for adequate space and climate control, as well as a location which would encourage more visitors. By April, 1978 a total of more than a million dollars was raised by local donors, foundations, and the federal grant. On July 7, 1979, the new building opened to the public. A special traveling exhibit of American paintings circa 1825-1915, on loan from the Cleveland Museum of Art, commemorated the opening. More than 20,000 visitors toured the building on the first day. The museum contains galleries for travelling exhibits, the Johnson brothers' Oriental and American Indian collections, the Miller-Preston collection, and decorative arts. Shaw retired as director in November, 1988. Upon her retirement, former assistant-director, Mrs. Curtis (Midge) Derby, assumed directorship. Recently, under Derby's leadership, the

museum has acquired a computer, which has been utilized to organize the museum's inventory, for easy access of information. The Johnson-Humrickhouse Museum is governed by the Coshocton Public Library Board of Trustees, which continues to maintain an active interest in the museum. The museum director prepares a monthly report, which she presents at each monthly meeting of the library board of trustees.

## A School District Library

The Coshocton Public Library was a school district library from 1924 through 1950. In June, 1931, the retirement of Clara B. Olney enabled Margaret Sahling to become the director of the library. Sahling had first volunteered as a high school page and, following graduation from Ohio Weslyan College, worked for three years in the Coshocton Public Library. Upon graduation from The Wisconsin Library School in 1931, she accepted the directorship. She served as director until January, 1970. Even though the library was not considered a county district library until 1950, Sahling introduced county-wide service by establishing "stations" at various points of Coshocton County. Being a rural area, the importance of library outreach was evident with the establishment of these county agencies.

On October 10, 1936, a permanent branch of the library was established in West Lafayette (a community located in eastern Coshocton County) in the basement of the Main Street School. Mrs. Jerry Newman became the librarian, followed by Mrs. Elmer Kobel, Mrs. Carl Hawk, Mrs. Harvey Buker, Mrs. Walker Babcock, Mrs. Lillie Bevington and Mrs. Charles (Nellie) Guilliams. In

August, 1946, the West Lafayette Branch moved to a rented store-front room on Main Street where it remained until 1991. In July, 1991, the branch moved to 601 East Main Street, into a renovated building, which once served as a gas station and local pizza restaurant.

Additional stations were established in county stores to provide a small supply of books to Coshocton County residents. The first of these opened February 12, 1937 in the Hartley store, and later in Magruder's store, in West Carlisle. March 7, 1937 marked the opening of the New Bedford station in the Getz store. The Plainfield Grange Hall housed a collection circulated by Mrs. Kathleen Bair, which later moved to Roahrigs in Plainfield, on March 15, 1937. On March 19, 1937, a collection was established in the Conesville store owned by Minners, and later by Fred Lutz. In Warsaw, on March 26, 1937, the first books were delivered to the Speckman store, later operated by Harry H. Lowe. The Warsaw collection was moved to Thompson's and later to Cullison's Television store from 1960-1961. At Walhonding, Wheeler's store contained a collection from August, 1937 until it relocated to Spurgeon's store because of its location in the flood area of the conservancy district. The Schmaltz store at Fresno allowed space for books from September 1937 until 1948. Edna and Stanley Mizer at Bakersville agreed to handle a collection October 26, 1937. Haxton store in New Guilford and Alexander's in New Castle opened stations in August, 1938. Laura Wright had the Nellie Station from 1942 until 1944, when the books were moved to Crago's store. Reed's store in West Bedford accepted a collection in January, 1943. Smith's store in Tiverton received its books March 1,

1943. The Mohawk station was established May 23, 1951 in Naomi Miller's store. These stations met the need of library service to the county residents as a fore-runner to the bookmobile service.

An additional extension service of the library included a sub-branch at the Coshocton City Hospital, with a hospital librarian on duty once a week. A collection of books on infant care was placed in the maternity section. A collection was also maintained at the nurses' home for the use of the hospital staff. Special loans were also made available to the high school library, other classrooms, and to the county jail.

A unique arrangement was organized in 1943 between the library and the eight consolidated schools of the county. A county school librarian was hired by the schools to act as a liaison with the library. Reference books and basic library collections were purchased by the schools. The public library assumed the librarian's mileage, supplies, and the delivery of library books to the schools.

## A County District Library

On November 13, 1950, at the request of the library trustees, the county commissioners organized a county district library under a new state law. Under state law, four of the seven board members were appointed by the county commissioners, and the other three were selected by the judge of the court of common pleas. At the first meeting of the Board of Trustees of the County District Library, it was moved that the board meet each month, alternately at the library and the museum.[31] Funding for the library was handled by the County Treasurer. Monetary

support came from the "intangibles" tax on stocks and bonds of all county residents. Each year the director of the library submitted a budget requesting funds for the operation of the library and the Johnson-Humrickhouse Museum.

Coshocton's first bookmobile went into service during the summer of 1952. A used bookmobile, a 1939 Dodge, was purchased from the Lorain Library. During the summer of 1952, Helene Stuber, Margaret Bower, and Margaret Sahling traveled with the driver, O. J. Buser, for different trips on a two-week cycle. A new type of bookmobile was purchased in May, 1955 for $10,000. In 1984, a 33 foot-long air-conditioned Blue Bird Bookmobile replaced one which was purchased in 1968. In 1991, the bookmobile circulated approximately 90,000 books.

In 1954, the first public meeting was held to consider an addition to the library. After study, it was recommended that the library board set out to find a new location for a new library because the Carnegie building and site were not suitable for reconstruction. The County Budget Commisssion was instructed to establish a building and improvement fund. The Coshocton school system had hoped that the library would purchase the Bancroft School and lot. However, the property was not acceptable because its location was distanced from the center of the city. In 1958, the lower lot next to Chestnut Street School was purchased for $36,000. In 1959, the building contract was awarded to Freytague & Freytague of Sidney, Ohio. In 1960, the Coshocton city and county voters turned down a $350,000 bond issue for library construction. Recognizing the need for renovation of the Carnegie building, a remodeling project was

completed on November 24, 1963. An all-steel mezzanine deck, power-book lift, new aluminum front doors, modern restrooms, and second floor study and meeting room were among the improvements to the Carnegie building. On January 30, 1964, the library received an endowment from the will of Adolph Golden, Coshocton businessman. The $25,000 was to be used to establish a building fund for the library. After ten years, the bequest could be used for expansion, if the trustees determined a new building was not feasible. After 38 years as library director, Margaret Sahling retired December, 1968.

Kenneth Tewell of Troy, Ohio became the director of the library in January, 1969. On April 22, 1970 the Coshocton County Public Library Board received the deed from the U.S. Department of Health and Welfare for the old Post Office building and the .620 acre of land at the corner of Main and Seventh Streets. The building had been vacant since the post office had moved to its new location on Chestnut Street in November, 1967.[32] J. H. Tribbie and Associates, Inc. of Coshocton, Ohio was selected to plan and supervise the conversion of the former post office building into the new library facility. Numerous financial donations were received by area businesses and individuals to support the new library fund. August 25, 1974 marked the open house for the relocated library at 655 Main Street. A special loan of artifacts from the Johnson-Humrickhouse Museum was on display, with appropriate library books, at the open house. In the fall of 1976, the museum sponsored a display at the library of twenty original paintings by Coshocton-born Matthew A. (Matt) Clark. The museum and library connection was recognized by the

public through these cooperative displays.

in April, 1978, Susan Anderson was appointed library director, following the resignation of Kenneth Tewell. In June, 1979, the Junior Woman's Club of Coshocton presented a Dukane microfilm reader to the library to be used in the local history room. The first annual used book sale began in July, 1979. In 1981, the new automated circulation system was put into use by seven libraries in a five-county area. The Mid-Ohio Library Organization (MOLO) computerized system was funded by a federal grant of the Library Services and Construction Act and through local library funds. The system uses zebra barcodes on books and patron library cards. The MOLO videocassette circuit began in April, 1983. In May, 1984, the library collection reached the six-figure mark for the first time in the library's history. A total of 100,274 books were owned by the Coshocton Public Library.

The Pomerene House, formerly owned by the Humrickhouse family, located at 3rd and Mulberry Streets, was donated to the Johnson-Humrickhouse Museum in 1981. Warner Pomerene provided that interest from a trust fund be used to operate the house. Expenses continued to exceed the yearly income, so the library board entered an agreement on July 2, 1984 with Mr. and Mrs. Ken Free for the purchase of the property for $100,000. The Frees intended to move their funeral home business to the Pomerene House. The sale was opposed by local residents, who were not notified of this special meeting. They objected to the area being rezoned for commercial interests and so formed a non-profit corporation, The Pomerene Fine Arts Center of Coshocton, Inc.

Constructed in 1834 by George Silliman, the home had been owned by the Humrickhouse family, and later by the Pomerenes. According to the 1974 National Register of Historic Places, the Pomerene Home is a "fine example of Greek Revival architecture, exhibiting a high degree of craftmanship and detailing."[33] The Pomerene Fine Arts Center group was able to prevent the sale of the home to the Frees. They hoped to achieve three objectives: the preservation of the mansion as a local historic landmark; the creation of a center for the arts, including painting, sculpture, photography, creative writing, music, dance, poetry and recitations; and the enhancement of the "living quality" of the community and the revitilization of the downtown area. Sheila Waters Parkhill was hired as executive director by the library board of trustees. The Pomerene Center for the Arts sponsors the annual Dogwood Festival of the Arts each spring and organizes various art exhibits and special events throughout the year. The executive director prepares a report for the monthly library board of trustees' meetings.

In 1985, the Ohio General Assembly set aside 6.3 percent of the state income tax dollars for local public libraries. This funding plan enabled the Coshocton Public Library to plan an expansion and renovation project. An addition was built which housed a new children's room, upstairs office space, and a small meeting room. Moving the children's collection allowed for an expanded local history area. The Library Services and Construction Act Grant, administered by the State Library of Ohio, provided 48 percent of the money needed to erect the library addition. The balance of the costs were paid by bequests

and the remaining surplus funds from the intangibles tax revenue. Charles Gallagher, Coshocton architect, planned the addition. An open-house for the new library addition was held on May 21, 1988. This addtion was included in the long-range plan for September, 1986 through December, 1991, written by Susan Anderson, director.

Due to illness, Susan Anderson resigned as director, and Ann Harding Miller was named director October 21, 1989. During her directorship the library has experienced the new technology of CD-ROM Reader's Guide service for patron use and the opening of the relocated West Lafayette Branch Library.

The library has continued to develop throughout its history as a dynamic center for the educational and recreational pursuits of the residents of Coshocton County. The Library Board of Trustees has had the foresight to recognize the importance of the arts in the course of library development. The Johnson-Humrickhouse Museum and, more recently, The Pomerene Center for the Arts, owe their existence to the citizens of Coshocton who have supported the arts and to the Coshocton Library Board of Trustees which oversees their operation. A library/museum partnership, a unique arrangement, is evident in the history of the Coshocton Public Library.

NOTES

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4. James Caccamo, Hudson, to author, TLS, 23 July 1992, Transcript in the hand of author, Coshocton.

5. Camille J. Leslie, conversation with author, 23 July 1992, Coshocton, by telephone, Massillon Public Library, Massillon.

6. Ann Yancura, conversation with author, 24 July 1992, Coshocton, by telephone, McKinley Memorial Library, Niles.

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